SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE NEWS FOR SUNDAY 19 JULY 2020

Good morning and welcome to the weekly news bulletin of the South African Radio League read by ..... [your name, call sign and QTH]

The South African Radio League broadcasts a news bulletin each Sunday in Afrikaans and in English at 08:15 and 08:30 Central African Time respectively on HF and various VHF and UHF repeaters around the country. The bulletin is relayed on Echolink by Johan, ZS6JPL. The audio and text bulletins can be downloaded from the League website at www.sarl.org.za. To join the bulletin mailing list, send an e-mail to the SARL Secretary.

In the news today:

THE ZS2 SPRINT THIS AFTERNOON

THE SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE HF PHONE, DIGITAL AND CW CONTESTS

and

ILLW ON TRACK FOR 2020

Stay tuned for more information on these and other interesting news items.

We start the bulletin this morning with news of a silent key.

It is with regret that we announce that the key of Chris van Eeden, ZS6CVE went silent on Sunday 12 July. Our deepest sympathies to his wife Bets, daughters Elsbiete and Chrizane, grandchildren, family and friends.

PAUSE

THE ZS2 SPRINT THIS AFTERNOON

Are there radio amateurs in the Eastern Cape? Well, you can find out this afternoon during the ZS2 Sprint, from 14:00 to 15:00 UTC with CW and phone activity on 40 meters. The exchange is an RS or RST report and your provincial or country abbreviation. QSOs with ZS2PE, ZS2BRC and ZS1820S count 5 points. Submit your log by Monday 27th July to contest@peham.co.za Read the rules in the 2020 Blue Book before the start of the contest.

PROBLEMS WITH THE SARL WEB SITE LAST WEEKEND

The SARL web site was extremely slow during the weekend of 11 and 12 July. The problem was reported to TouchNet, the ISP and the matter was investigated and corrected. The Council would like to thank Peter, ZS1PHD; Dave, ZS2DH; Colin, ZS6COL and the team from TouchNet for the work they did last weekend.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN RADIO LEAGUE HF PHONE, DIGITAL AND CW CONTESTS

The aim of the SARL HF Contests is for participants to contact as many amateurs in Southern Africa as possible on the 20, 40 and 80 meter amateur bands. There are three contests that you can take part in, starting with the HF Phone contest on Sunday 2 August, the HF Digital contest on Sunday 16 August and the HF CW contest on Sunday 30 August. Each contest runs from 14:00 to 17:00 UTC on each Sunday.

You can participate as a Single Operator Single Band, a Single Operator All Band, a Multi Operator Single Band, or a Multi Operator All Band (MOAB) station. Multi operator stations do not have to operate from the same location. The exchange is an RS, RSQ or RST report and a consecutive serial number starting at 001. MOAB stations may have a separate serial number per band.

Each QSO counts 1 point, with 2 points for each call area worked per band and 2 points for each station worked on all three bands. Trophies are awarded to the first place and the highest single band score in each contest and there is a trophy for the highest combined score in all three contests. A trophy is awarded to the Phone contestant in his or her first year of operating achieving the highest score, while trophies are awarded to the radio amateur under the age of 25 and to the YL achieving the highest score in the three contests.

COVER PICTURES FOR RADIO ZS

The Editor of Radio ZS is looking for photos of amateur radio in action to be used on the front cover of the magazine. Portrait orientation is preferred, landscape photos are difficult to use. Have a look at the covers of the last few issues of Radio ZS. Send your photograph to radiozs@sarl.org.za

You are listening to a news bulletin of the South African Radio League.

ILLW ON TRACK FOR 2020

Kevin, VK2CE says, ”Registrations for this year’s popular International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend, https://illw.net, have not been diminished by the global pandemic. The dates for this year’s event have been moved to a week later than normal so as to keep 15 August clear for those wanting to commemorate the 75th anniversary of Victory in the Pacific.

With some 5 weeks to go to 22 August, 222 entries have been received which, if experience is any indicator, should result in around 400 by starting date. No doubt most of the lockdowns and restrictions will still be in place, so adherence to local rules and regulations must be observed. Germany is well in the lead with 54 entries, followed by Australia with 29 entries and the USA with 27 entries. South Africa has 8 entries and Ghana will join the fun this year with 2 lighthouses. So far, we have 30 countries listed which, under the current circumstances, is quite amazing.

This event is a fun weekend designed to encourage exposure of amateur radio and lighthouses to the visiting public and to enable portable stations to contact each other at lighthouses. Compiling a log full of brief contacts is not acceptable and not in the spirit of the event. Please take care and observe your local lockdown regulations during the event as we really want you all back next year. Happy light-housing."

AMSAT-DL SUBMITS LUNAR LANDER PROPOSAL TO EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY

Germany's amateur satellite organization AMSAT-DL has submitted a comprehensive proposal to the European Space Agency (ESA) for its Lunar Amateur Radio Transponder (LunART) lunar lander, a communications platform on the Large European Lander to support communication and payload experiments. AMSAT-DL's Peter Guelzow, DB2OS and Matthias Bopp, DD1US, say that a LunART (called "LunaART" in the AMSAT-DL proposal) would support direct communication with Earth via amateur radio, support university and student payloads and offer direct access to their experiments and expand the reach of radio science. It could also provide backup communication capability and capacity during an emergency, or when the ESA network is busy.

The comprehensive radio platform would use the European frequency protocol of 2,4 GHz up and 10,45 GHz down (approximately 100 W), pioneered in the QO-100 satellite, the first geosynchronous amateur radio payload. The platform would also include a VHF/UHF transponder. AMSAT-DL would develop and build the hardware and software and provide ground station support via the 20-meter dish at AMSAT-DL headquarters in Bochum, Germany. They envision developing a smaller ground station with an approximately 1-meter dish to support groups, including schools and universities. Low-power beacons would transmit on various frequencies from VHF (145 MHz) to SHF (up to 24 GHz or even 47 GHz), AMSAT-DL's proposal says.

"This transponder would also be an ideal platform to develop new transmission schemes with novel modulation and coding techniques optimized for long-distance communications with the corresponding high latency (long delays)," AMSAT-DL said. "This would provide essential knowledge to prepare for a future Mars mission." In addition, LunART could include the capability to transmit still or slow-scan television images and video to schools "from cameras attached to the lander monitoring the moon surface and perhaps the Earth in the background [which] would be ideal stimuli for getting school kids and STEM organizations further interested in space."

The proposal is on open access at the ESA website and is now being evaluated. AMSAT-DL's LunART follows the Lunar Amateur Radio Interaction Experiment (LARIE) proposal from Andy Thomas, G0SFJ. Both refer to weak signal modes and suggest the same frequency bands. Thomas said he welcomes LunART as a well-developed proposal and hopes ESA will support it as well.

PROPAGATION REPORT

Hannes Coetzee, ZS6BZP, reports that the solar activity is expected to remain at low levels. There are currently no sunspot regions visible. If you want to do your own frequency predictions, the expected effective sunspot number for the week will be around one. The 20 and 30 m bands will, especially around sunset, provide some DX fun. For more information, please visit the website spaceweather.sansa.org.za

Finally, a Diary of some upcoming events:

This afternoon – The ZS2 Sprint

25 and 26 July – The Islands on the Air (IOTA) Contest

2 August – The SARL HF Phone Contest

9 August – The YL Sprint

10 August – The Youth Sprint

15 August – The SARL 95 40 m Club Sprint and Victory in the Pacific Day

16 August – The SARL HF Digital Contest

22 and 23 August – The International Lighthouse and Lightship Weekend

30 August – The SARL HF CW Contest

To conclude our bulletin, a recap of our main story:

The ZS2 Sprint is on the air from 14:00 to 15:00 UTC this afternoon with CW and phone activity on 40 meters. The exchange is an RS or RST report and your provincial or country abbreviation.

This concludes our bulletin for this morning.

We invite clubs and individuals to submit news items of interest to radio amateurs and shortwave listeners, in both English and Afrikaans, if possible, by following the News Inbox link on the South African Radio League web page. News items to include in the bulletin should reach the news team no later than the Thursday preceding the bulletin date.

You are welcome to join us every Sunday morning for the weekly radio program, Amateur Radio Today at 10:00 Central African Time. The program can be heard on VHF and UHF repeaters countrywide and on 7 082 kHz lower sideband. A rebroadcast by Andy, ZS6ADY, can be heard on Monday evenings at 19:30 Central African Time on 3 620 kHz. We welcome your signal reports, comments and suggestions; please send these by e-mail to artoday@sarl.org.za.

You have listened to a news bulletin compiled by Dennis Green, ZS4BS, edited by Herman Erasmus, ZS6CTA and read by .....

From the news team, best wishes for the week ahead.